

SECTION 1

A Neighborhood Plan for Tyreeanna/Pleasant Valley

Introduction

During the preparation of the City of Lynchburg Comprehensive Plan: 2002-2020 (the “Comprehensive Plan”), adopted by the City Council on September 10, 2002, the City identified a neighborhood plan for the Tyreeanna/Pleasant Valley area as a priority project.

Completion of the neighborhood plan is essential for several reasons:

- Changes will result from the expected increase in traffic on U.S. Route 460, when the Madison Heights Bypass opens in 2005-2006. There will also be several other changes in traffic circulation through the neighborhood before the Bypass opens.
- With the opening of the Madison Heights Bypass, the neighborhood will become a major gateway to the City of Lynchburg for southbound traffic on U.S. Route 29/460. The design of this gateway represents an opportunity to welcome travelers to the City and the potential for economic development.
- Neighborhood desires, such as sewer service and park facilities. The neighborhood plan represents an opportunity to identify these requests so that the City can consider possible modifications to City policies, then include the appropriate items when developing the capital improvements program (CIP) and budget.
- Changes in land use due to the presence of City facilities, such as the existing landfill, the future landfill, and the wastewater treatment plant. For example, a coordinated planning process will enable the City to prepare for post-closure use of the existing landfill, to develop the new landfill in a manner that will mitigate possible negative impacts, and to consider alternative methods for disposal of the sludge from the wastewater treatment plant.
- The opportunity to determine the most appropriate long-range land uses for the neighborhood and to develop the objectives and strategies that will enable the City and the neighborhood to achieve these goals.

Introduction

The neighborhood plan (the “plan”) has been prepared within the context of the City’s Comprehensive Plan and reflects the vision, goals, objectives, and strategies presented in the Comprehensive Plan. Preparation of the neighborhood plan is an opportunity to address a smaller area of the City in greater detail, with the participation of area residents and business owners.

In preparing this Plan, the City addressed neighborhood needs and issues from the perspective of both the property owners, residents, and business people in the neighborhood and the City as a whole. The City strives to balance both neighborhood and citywide needs, while taking into account the availability of City staff and funding.

This plan is simply a concept for the neighborhood; it is not a commitment by the City to provide the services and facilities described in the plan. Actually achieving the goals stated in the plan depends on a number of factors, including the availability of funds, the City’s other needs, actions taken by state officials, and many other factors.

The neighborhood plan recommends future land uses and includes a series of goals, objectives, and strategies designed to guide development of the neighborhood according to the desired land use pattern during the 20-year timeframe of the plan. These land uses will be described in the text of the plan and illustrated on the Tyreeanna/Pleasant Valley Future Land Use Map.

Area Included in the Neighborhood Plan

The area covered by this Plan is that portion of the City of Lynchburg known as Tyreeanna and Pleasant Valley; that is, the area within the City’s corporate limits and generally east of the creek known as “Joe’s Branch” that flows between Rockwell Road and Winston Ridge Road, as shown on the map, Figure 1.1.

The neighborhood represents 4 square miles or 8% of the City’s 50 square mile area.

Figure 1.1. Area included in the Tyreeanna/Pleasant Valley Neighborhood Plan.



Neighborhood Planning History

The City began work on the neighborhood plan in 1999, by hiring the consulting team led by Mary Means & Associates, Inc. to work on the plan in conjunction with City staff and the neighborhood. This same consultant team was working simultaneously on the City's Comprehensive Plan. Before the formal neighborhood planning process began, City staff had been working with the neighborhood on issues related to the impacts of the City landfill and wastewater treatment plant.

The process of preparing the neighborhood plan has been driven by a combination of 1) Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) actions, 2) issues involving City facilities, and 3) neighborhood concerns.

For several years, VDOT has been designing and constructing the Route 29/Madison Heights Bypass, the James River Bridge, and the interchange that will connect the bypass with Route 460 in the Tyreeanna/Pleasant Valley area. When these projects are completed, the section of the existing Route 460 between the western merge of the new Route 460 and the Campbell Avenue interchange will be the only partially controlled access portion of the entire 16-mile freeway/expressway from the northern terminus of the Route 29 Bypass in the Town of Amherst all the way through Lynchburg. The rest of the 16-mile highway will be limited access. The mile-long section through Tyreeanna/Pleasant Valley represents a potential safety concern and future "choke point" where the flow of traffic will be forced to slow down or stop at traffic signals.

"Limited access" is the term used to describe freeway-like roads where the only places to get on or off the roadway are at an entrance or exit ramp. "Controlled access" describes roads that also have signalized intersections, but where the number and spacing of driveways and other entrances are regulated. "Partially controlled" is used to describe roads such as Route 460 where there is a combination of driveways, entrances, intersections, and the traffic signal proposed at the intersection with the Concord Turnpike. The median through this section of Route 460 also provides some additional restrictions on access by restricting turning and crossing movements to specific locations.

Before work began on this neighborhood plan, VDOT had been studying the future extension of the Route 29 Bypass southward from Route 460 (Tyreeanna/Pleasant Valley community) to the vicinity of Route 29/24 intersection (Yellow Branch) in Campbell County. This future extension is called the "Lynchburg Bypass." Two potential corridors were being considered, an "eastern" and a "western" one. Due to the time necessary to select the corridor and construct the Lynchburg Bypass, an interim project with safety-related upgrades to the one-mile section of Route 460 in the Tyreeanna/Pleasant Valley area was programmed. The goal was to complete the safety improvements on Route 460 by the time the Madison Heights Bypass opened. However, with the downturn in the

state economy and VDOT's budget reductions for construction, both the Route 460 interim safety improvements and the Lynchburg Bypass corridor study were removed from VDOT's 6-Year Construction Program.

In an effort to blend future land use and transportation needs, the City's first efforts on the neighborhood plan, including initial interviews with stakeholders and the first public workshops, were based on VDOT's interim and long-term alternatives for Route 460. As funding becomes available, an ultimate resolution to address future traffic demands along Route 460 would consider one of the four proposed alternative routes to connect the end of the Madison Heights Bypass interchange with the existing Route 460. One of those alternatives was the existing roadway, a second alternative was located to the north, and the remaining two were south of the existing roadway.

Early in the neighborhood planning process, the City also recognized the opportunity offered by the additional traffic coming into Lynchburg on Route 29/460. The new highway entrance to the City represents a gateway where travelers could be welcomed to the City of Lynchburg and directed to possible destinations in the City. Travelers might also be looking for services such as gas stations, restaurants, and other services. In fact, a potential developer could be expected to approach the City with a request to build facilities to provide one or more of these services. Construction of new businesses in the area would provide revenues to the City, as well as services that might be useful to neighborhood residents.

Current Planning Process

In August 2002, City staff and land use planning consultants prepared a new scope of work to complete the neighborhood plan based on the existing Route 460. VDOT also hired a consultant, Parsons Brinckerhoff, to prepare an Access/Corridor Management Study for the one-mile section of Route 460 from the merge with the new Route 460 to the Campbell Avenue intersection. The results of this study have been used to make decisions relating to access, building setbacks, and both short- and long-term circulation alternatives.

The City also organized a Neighborhood Plan Steering Committee made up of seven residents and business people in the area. During several public meetings, this committee offered feedback on the plan and other matters. A public workshop was held on February 24, 2003, to solicit input from the neighborhood. The input from that workshop was used to develop this draft plan.

Introduction

Overview of Expected Changes in the Tyreeanna/Pleasant Valley Area

Over the next 20 years, the City expects a number of significant changes to take place in or near the Tyreeanna/Pleasant Valley neighborhood. Each of them has been considered during the preparation of this neighborhood plan and incorporated into the goals, objectives, strategies, and the Tyreeanna/Pleasant Valley Future Land Use Map.

Figure 1.2. Timeline of Events in the Tyreeanna/Pleasant Valley Neighborhood 2003-2025.

2003	June	New Route 460 opens. Old Route 460 closed at the mid-point to permit construction of the bridge over the connection between the Madison Heights Bypass and the interchange.
	July	Adoption of Neighborhood Plan.
	September	Organization and first meeting of the Neighborhood Plan Implementation Committee.
2004		Old Route 460 ("Pleasant Valley Boulevard") opens to through traffic. Funding for preparation of a plan for post-closure use(s) at the current City landfill included in FY 2005 6-year CIP. Funding also included in the CIP for preparation of plans for new City landfill, to allow time to plant additional trees and otherwise take advantage of the time between 2004 and opening of the landfill in 2014.
2005 - 2006		The Madison Heights Bypass, the bridge over the James River, and the interchange open. First major influx of traffic on the stretch of new/existing Route 460 through the Tyreeanna/ Pleasant Valley neighborhood.
2007		The City opens Phase IV of the landfill. At this time, about 8 acres nearest to Tyreeanna Road will be closed and capped (part of Phase I).
2010		Planning begins for post-closure use of existing City landfill.
2014 (approx.)		The current City landfill closes and construction of post-closure use(s) begins.
2025		Projected 51,000 vehicles per day on the new Route 460 without additional development and as many as 66,500 vehicles per day if all potential development shown on the Future Land Use Map occurs.

The City expects the following seven changes to characterize life in the Tyreeanna/Pleasant Valley neighborhood:

- 1. Increased Traffic on Route 460.** The new Madison Heights Bypass, James River Bridge, and Route 460/U.S. 29 Interchange are scheduled to open in late 2005 or early 2006. Portions of the bypass may open earlier. The new section of Route 460 is scheduled to open in mid-2003 and the old Route 460 will close for construction of a bridge over the new interchange. The old Route 460 will be closed on both sides of the bridge for approximately six months and is scheduled to reopen in spring 2004.

When the new bypass, bridge, and interchange open, traffic on Route 460 through the neighborhood is projected to increase by approximately 15,000 vehicle trips per day. Such a significant increase in traffic presents serious safety concerns and illustrates the need for alternate circulation patterns to accommodate both neighborhood and through traffic. These safety concerns include the need for safety improvements to the westbound lanes of Route 460 between the point where the new Route 460 merges into the existing roadway and the Campbell Avenue/Route 501 interchange. These improvements were identified and included in plans for the roadway in one of the four alternatives considered in 2001-2002. However, they were dropped due to lack of funding when VDOT dropped the four alternatives from further study.



**The new bridge that will carry Madison Heights Bypass traffic over the James River.
(Photo taken in October 2003.)**

- 2. Lynchburg Bypass Route.** For economic development reasons, the City prefers the “western” route for the Lynchburg Bypass. To encourage the choice of the western route, the City would like traffic to flow through the Tyreeanna/Pleasant Valley area quickly and safely. The City would like to avoid having new businesses locate in such a way that they have direct access on to Route 460. Instead, the area has been planned so that travelers and residents may access a new proposed “Village Center” containing commercial uses from one of the local streets. There will also be an attractive gateway area to welcome travelers to Lynchburg. Further information about the gateway and proposed Village Center is given in Section 5. Areas for Special Planning.

Introduction

3. Direct Access Points onto Route 460. While a decision on the Lynchburg Bypass route is not expected for years, the City wants to increase the likelihood that the western route will be chosen. Preventing any new access points directly on to Route 460 and eliminating as many of the existing access points as possible would make the western route more attractive. Encouraging businesses to locate in a well-planned Village Center area with access from local roads will eliminate the need for additional access points along Route 460. This proposed Village Center will be a mixed use development in the area south of Route 460 and between Holcomb Path Road and Poston Street. The Access/Corridor Management Study was used to prepare this part of the plan.

4. Existing City Landfill. The existing City landfill is scheduled to close in approximately 2014 and the post-closure use or uses chosen can be an amenity for the neighborhood and the City as a whole. Several possible uses have been suggested, among them a park, a natural area, a community garden (possibly with a “farmers market” area), and a golf course (a long-term possibility). Following closure of the landfill, the City is required to monitor and maintain the area for at least 30 years according to a closure plan filed with the Department of Environmental Quality. Due to potential changes in ground level resulting from natural subsidence, some uses (e.g., a golf course or ballfields) are not suitable for the surface of a recently closed landfill. These uses may be suitable after a number of years have passed (estimates are 10 to 20 years) and the subsidence has become minimal. The City will be choosing a short-term or transitional use or uses, and may decide to have a different use once the subsidence has become minimal or stopped.

Closing the old landfill will eliminate the dust, blowing trash, and odors from both sludge disposal and the waste at this site, thereby making some portions of the neighborhood more attractive for additional housing and commercial development.

5. New City Landfill. The City owns a substantial amount of property (over 150 acres) on the north side of the Concord Turnpike, which is being held as the site for the landfill after 2014. The expected life of this new landfill is estimated at 20-25 years. Because the new landfill site slopes in a different direction and because new techniques are available for operating a landfill, it may be possible to mitigate the odor, dust, and litter problems significantly.

The City may also decide to change the sludge disposal method from landfilling as is done now to another method. Since the odor problem now experienced in the neighborhood is primarily from the sludge as it is first dumped in the landfill, changing to another sludge disposal method is likely to have a positive impact on the neighborhood.

6. Additional Sewer Service for the Neighborhood. The major commercial or mixed use area proposed in this plan—the Village Center—is in an area that is not sewered. The City does not have a policy of providing sewer service to encourage economic development or neighborhood revitalization. Providing sewer will be expensive, in part because one or more pump stations will be required. Very few businesses would be able to locate without sewer; few of them could exist with a drainfield. In fact, soils in most of the area are not conducive to septic systems.

Sewer service is also not available for many of the residential portions of the neighborhood. Even where it is available, not all homeowners have chosen to connect to it. In some areas, poor soils are contributing to the failure of existing drainfields. Unless existing drainfields can be repaired or new drainfields constructed, there may be no option except to connect the homes to

the City sewer system. Otherwise, these houses may eventually be in violation of health regulations and have a negative impact on the neighborhood.

Public Works and Utilities staff have provided preliminary cost estimates for sewerage much (but not all) of the unsewered portions of the neighborhood. This information is included later in the plan. The City will decide based on the sewer master plan to be prepared and through its CIP and budget process when and under what circumstances additional sewer service will be provided.

7. Housing. The location and density of residential areas in the neighborhood are changing due to City actions, the presence or absence of sewer service, the proximity to the current landfill, and the increasing traffic on Route 460. For example, the City has purchased and demolished several houses located in or near the current City landfill. If sewer service were available, the homes and remaining home sites on Rockwell Road, portions of Tyreeanna Road, Statham Road, Aultice Lane, and Holcomb Path Road would become more attractive. Future land uses proposed for many residential areas may not be feasible without sewers. Further, residents of homes facing directly on Route 460 may experience problems with traffic noise.

To summarize, all seven of these changes in the neighborhood have been considered during the preparation of this neighborhood plan, and the plan recommends ways to deal with them.

Organization of the Neighborhood Plan

The Tyreeanna/Pleasant Valley Neighborhood Plan is divided into six sections. Following this introduction, Section 2 presents a list of the goals, objectives, and strategies that will guide development of the neighborhood, along with an explanation of where they came from and how they will be used.

Section 3 covers current conditions in the neighborhood, including its annexation history, demographics, current land uses and zoning, topography, and others. This information is essential for making decisions about future land uses and the treatment of areas experiencing significant changes.

Section 4 defines each type of future land use and describes locations recommended for those land uses, as shown on the Tyreeanna/Pleasant Valley Future Land Use Map.

Section 5 focuses on those areas that are experiencing changes as described above, including gateways, the new Route 460, the “Village Center,” the current City landfill, the future City landfill, and Pleasant Valley Boulevard (the “old” Route 460). These areas are given special consideration and their future described in detail. The last part of this section contains a list of design guidelines for future development in the neighborhood.

Introduction

Section 6, the final section, addresses implementation of the neighborhood plan, specifically the creation of a neighborhood association and a committee to oversee implementation of the neighborhood plan.